



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

March 24, 2009

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

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ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE FUNDS FOR AT-RISK YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

This is in response to the February 24, 2009, motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, amended by Supervisor Antonovich and unanimously carried, related to the Economic Stimulus Package (ESP) and employment and job training opportunities for at-risk youth, including current and former foster youth. The motion instructs the Chief Executive Office (CEO), in conjunction with County Counsel, Directors of Public Works (DPW), Internal Services (ISD), and other departments as needed, to report back to the Board within 30 days, with a specific list of recommended actions to ensure that jobs and job training for at-risk youth will be created as a result of the ESP.

At-risk youth, including current and former foster youth, are a target population of the Los Angeles County Workforce Stimulus Plan. This plan is being prepared for use of the anticipated \$195 million Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) contingency funds, as well as the \$30.7 million Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds. It is the goal of the County to secure 10,000 employment and/or job training slots in the public, private and non-profit sectors. A registry of job seekers, including youth, will be developed and jointly managed by the departments of Community and Senior Services (CSS) and Public Social Services (DPSS).

Los Angeles County is anticipating receiving \$15.1 million in WIA youth grants. The WIA youth grants provide economically disadvantaged youth between the ages of 14 and 21 with year-round employment and training services. WIA youth participants must have at least one of the following barriers to employment in order to be eligible for

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services: (1) be basic skills deficient; (2) a school dropout; (3) homeless, a runaway or foster child; (4) pregnant or parenting; (5) youthful offender; or (6) require additional assistance to complete an educational program to secure and maintain employment. For those young adults over the age of 21, we are also expecting an estimated \$6.5 million in WIA adult grants and \$9.1 million in dislocated workers' grants.

Specific actions to ensure seamless identification, referral, and placement into jobs will be implemented through collaboration involving the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), CSS, and DPSS among others. The Youth Jobs Cross Cluster Collaborative (YJCCC) is a vehicle that can be utilized to achieve the aforementioned. The YJCCC is convened monthly by CSS and attended by staff from CEO, DCFS, DHR, Probation, DPSS, the Employment Development Department, Los Angeles County Office of Education, and the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. Special attention will be paid to eliminate barriers to employment such as transportation and securing vital records (i.e., birth certificate, social security card, and California Identification Card).

We will prioritize recruitment, selection and retention of youth residing in the four County gang strategy zones (Florence-Firestone, Harbor Gateway, Pacoima and Monrovia/Duarte); the 11,000 18-24 year olds currently receiving General Relief; current and former foster and probation youth; youth who reside in CalWORKs households; and those who reside in the catchments of the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) contractors.

In addition, stimulus funds will be used to hire at least 100 youth as Peer Advisors (PAs) for DCFS, in partnership with CSS. The PA program will place former foster youth, including those who aged out, were reunified or adopted, in a paid training capacity. The PAs will be stationed in each DCFS regional office under the supervision of a Children Services Administrator, who will also serve as a mentor to the youth. The PAs will have the primary responsibility of providing transitional assistance and mentoring to youth with challenging behaviors who are age-appropriate for transition planning.

The CEO has worked with County Counsel to devise draft standard language for countywide contracts that will require prioritizing hiring from this pool of candidates. The CEO is also working closely to align priorities with the DPW and ISD on projects that will be funded by stimulus dollars.

The County is committed to ensuring that at-risk youth are identified and supported in securing employment. It is of benefit to the youth, their families, and this County to allow them to explore possible career choices and facilitate their success in both employment and financial sustainability.

Each Supervisor
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If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know, or your staff may contact Jenny Serrano at (213) 974-0801, or via e-mail at jserrano@ceo.lacounty.gov.

WTF:SRH:MS
JS:hn

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

Economic Stimulus Package Funds for At-Risk Youth Employment_Board Memo